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The Role of Scientists in the Education Program of JPL's Astrobiology
Institutes: A PI's Perspective.

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Astrobiology is the study of life in the universe, a topic which has enormous public appeal. The NASA Astrobiology Institute consists of a geographically diverse but scientifically interconnected set of 15 research teams which promote, conduct and lead integrated multidisciplinary research in astrobiology. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, CA, now hosts two of the NAI research teams: one focused on in situ detection of life in our own Solar System, and the other, led by the author, focused on remote-sensing detection of life in extrasolar planetary systems. These two research efforts use very different techniques and expertise to address the overarching theme of the search for life elsewhere in the Universe. This research theme offers a compelling context and rich source of examples for learning fundamental concepts in earth and space science, physical science and life sciences. This talk will briefly describe the wide range of EPO products implemented and planned by the JPL astrobiology groups, and will concentrate on the diversity of roles the research scientists play in the EPO activities. This talk will also provide a Principal Investigator's perspective on the importance of EPO programs for astrobiology research, and the difficulties and triumphs encountered in implementing these EPO programs.

Biosphere/atmosphere interactions

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